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THE LETTER

Sent by the States-General of the
UNITED PROVINCES
Of the *Low Countreys*
TO
HIS MAJESTY,
By their Trumpeter :

Together with His
MAJESTIES ANSWER
To the said *Letter.*

Translated out of *French* into *English.*

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LETTER

TO THE HONORABLE

MEMBER OF CONGRESS

FROM

TO

THE HONORABLE

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FROM

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TO THE HONORABLE

MEMBER OF CONGRESS

FROM



RECEIVED BY HIS HONORABLE MEMBER
JAN 20 1873

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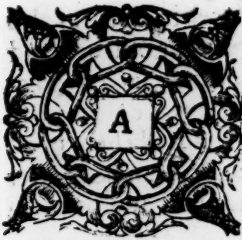
THE L E T T E R

Sent by the
STATES-GENERAL

Of the *United Provinces*

TO
HIS MAJESTY,
By their Trumpeter.

S I R E,



S we have never desired any thing more then to merit the good Will of Your Majesty, and to cultivate a Friendship which had been heretofore Hereditary between Your Majesties Kingdom and this Republick; so we were beyond measure troubled when we saw Your Majesty exasperated against us, and that by the Artifices of evil minded persons, Your Subjects and Ours have been overwhelmed with those miseries which are inseparable from War, and brought to shed that blood which hath been alwayes dear to either side. The sad experience we had thereof on both parts in the preceeding War, had given us cause to believe at the same time, that after we were re-united, the Peace would be a blessing which was no more to be ravished from us. And we were the rather perswaded of it, because the New Alliances we were entered into, seemed able to make our Union eternal: But seeing Divine Providence, for the Chastisement of the two Nations, hath permitted that things should not continue long in that happy estate, we no sooner perceived a Mis-understanding arise, but we thought our selves obliged to use all imaginable endeavours to stop the progress of it, and to omit nothing that might contribute to the preventing so great an evil as that of a Rupture. In order to which, being certainly informed that Your Majesty was offended at a Medal, which we had not suffered to be sold, but that we thought it very innocent, we immediatly suppressed it, and caused the very Stamps to be broken, for fear there might be some made secretly; And to give Your Majesty essential proofs of the esteem we had of Your Friendship, we yielded to Your Majesty whatever You were pleased to demand of us in behalf of the Inhabitants of *Surinam*, how prejudicial however the thing were to us, and whatsoever reason we otherwise had not to consent to it. At the same time we sent the *Sieur Van Beuningen* to Your Majesty for removing, if it were possible, the sinister impressions which some laboured to possess Your Majesty with, and for perfecting a

Regulation proposed by Your Majesties Ambassador between Your *East-India* Company and Ours. Since that, although the little success which the said *Sieur Van Beuningens* Negotiation had had, gave us but too great cause to fear that we should not succeed better for the future; yet we no sooner understood that there were some who would persuade Your Majesty, as well against all likelihood of truth, as truth it self, That we treated underhand with *France* to the prejudice of Your Majesties interests, but we gave order without delay to our Ambassador with Your Majesty, to declare to Your Majesty in our name, That to shew the falsehood of those reports which were spread abroad to our disadvantage, and to give Your Majesty essential and unquestionable marks of the sincerity of our intentions, we were ready to enter into such an Alliance with You, as You should think fit, how strict soever it should be, and to go far beyond any thing we had hitherto done, for securing the Peace of *Europe*. Then followed the affair of the Flagg, wherein we think our conduct hath been with all imaginable respect & towards Your Majesties Person: And although the Answer we gave to Your Ambassadors Memorial be such, as we shall alwayes be ready to submit to the judgement of all *Europe*, Yet upon complaint that it was obscure and insufficient, we sent an Ambassador extraordinary to Your Majesty, and gave power to him, as also to our ordinary Ambassador, to clear what should be thought obscure, and to add what should be necessary. But in stead of entring into regular Conferences with them, and letting them know what was defective in our Answer, they were neglected, and no Conference granted them upon the point which might have ended all our differences, till an hour after Your Majesties Declaration of War had been read and approved in Your Council.

All this, *SIRE*, doth sufficiently evidence, with what application and zeal we have laboured to satisfy Your Majesty, and to extinguish in its beginning, a Fire which is ready to consume all Christendom. And as we have not entered into this War, but from an indispensable necessity of defending and protecting our Subjects, we have ever since the Rupture, as much as we were able, sought Your Majesties Friendship, and never given over the making overtures of Peace. Upon which account, we sent our Deputies Extraordinary to Your Majesty the last year in the moneth of *June*, in the year, 1672. who were confined to *Hampton-Court*, without having any Audience given them, or being heard what they had to say on our part. A Minister from the Elector of *Brandenburg* passed also into *England* upon the same subject, and charged himself at our request, with the representing to Your Majesty, the ardent desire we had to see Your Majesty entertain other sentiments, and our disposition to do any thing in our power, to acquire again the honour of Your Majesties good correspondence. Since that, upon the Proposition made by the Mediators of a general Truce, for as much as according to our judgement, we could not consent to it without hazarding the safety of our States; yet to evidence to Your Majesty, how great a desire we had to give you all possible marks of our Respect, and to the end to procure to Your Subjects, all the advantages which they could have received from a general Truce, we offered one by Sea to Your Majesty for the term of a year, or a longer time, if Your Majesty thought convenient; judging,

that in the condition things were then in, we could not give a greater proof of the ardent passion we had to smooth the way to a happy Reconciliation, then by putting all Your Majesties Subjects into a condition of tasting the sweetness of Peace, while ours should suffer all the incommodities of War. The Ministers of the King of *Spain* have represented the same things from time to time to Your Majesty, and have often repeated their instances to encline Your Majesty to Peace: But besides all these advances, and the steps we have made in publick, we have made use of other means which we judged more efficacious; And his Highness the Prince of *Orange*, as well of his own inclination, as at the request we have several times reiterated to him, hath used all imaginable wayes of regaining the honour of Your Majesties friendship for us, and representing to You the advantage and glory Your Majesty might acquire, by re-establishing the Quiet of Christendom, and giving us a Peace which we had so often and so ardently desired. But albeit we had all reason to hope, that the instances of a Prince who hath the honour to be so nearly related to Your Majesty, and whose personal merit is so well known, would at last prevail over those who are ill-affected to us; and that besides we could hardly believe, that after His Highnesses interests and ours were become common, and were no longer separate in any thing, Your Majesty would retain Your former sentiments, and go about to involve in our ruine one of the most Illustrious Princes of Your blood; we have nevertheless with great sorrow seen, that all these reasons have been alike weak, and that Your Majesty hath not been induced by any motive to abate any thing of Your first rigour. So that when we expected a favourable Answer to our Overtures, it hath been declared to us at *Cologne*, that no Peace was to be hoped, unlesse there were accorded, not only to Your Majesty and the Most Christian King, but also to the Elector of *Cologne* and the Bishop of *Munster*, such Conditions as never were demanded of a Free People, and which can so little be proposed as Articles of Peace, that they can only be the consequences of an Absolute Conquest, the subversion of the Reformed Religion, of which Your Majesty and the Kings Your most Illustrious Predecessors, have been the strongest Support and Defenders, and which carried with them at once the utter ruine not only of us, but also of the *Low-Countries* belonging to the King of *Spain*.

This hath obliged us on our side, after we had resolved upon a necessary defence, to presse our Friends to enter into a stricter Alliance with us; And it hath pleased God so to blesse our endeavours, and the means we have used in order thereunto, that the most August House of *Austria* hath declared in our favour, and the most Serene King of *Spain* in particular hath concluded with us a League Offensive and Defensive, in pursuance whereof he hath already declared War against the King of *France*. Things being thus, *S I R E*, Your Majesty will easily believe that the consequences must be greater, but before the evil be past remedy, we thought fit to make one final essay, and to assure Your Majesty, that whatsoever change hath hapned in *Europe*, our deference and respect for Your Majesty is still the same; and that how considerable and how po-

tent soever our Allies are, we are not the lesse disposed to give Your Majesty all the satisfaction which You can reasonably pretend; And we have this happinesse, that our Allies are of the same mind with us herein; we presume therefore to hope that Your Majesty will not refuse at our request and their intercession, what we have not been hitherto able to obtain; And that You will not augment the desolation which is already but too universal.

But that we may omit nothing that may dispose Your Majesty thereunto, we beseech You to reflect upon all that hath passed since the beginning of the War, and at the same time to consider that it is from a particular one become general. When Your Majesty engaged in it, we were the only Enemies; At present a great part of *Europe* is no lesse interested therein than we; And Your Majesty cannot continue a War, which hath already been so ruinous, without declaring it against those who are united with us, and without hazarding the Safety of all Christendom, if the Arms of the King of *France* should be victorious through the succours given by Your Majesty to him. And Your Majesty can no longer take it ill that we yield not what Your Majesty might demand of us for *France*, since by an indispensable necessity we can no longer do it but with the agreement of our Allies. So that as the General Treaty appears accompanied with many difficulties, and that we foresee that it will be a means to continue this unhappy War, which we desire to put an end to speedily, especially with Your Majesty, we shall think our selves very happy if any of these considerations may make impression upon Your Majesties mind, and dispose You to resume those sentiments which we have heretofore with joy observed in Your Majesty, and in which, upon the reconciliation we promise to our selves, we doubt not but Your Majesty will continue for ever. In the mean time we pray God,

S I R E,

To crown Your Majesties Reign with felicity, and to blesse
Your Royal Person with health and long life.

At the Hague, the 25. of October, 1673.

Your MAJESTIES

Most humble Servants,

*The States-General of the United Provinces of the
Low Countreys.*

GASP. FAGEL.

By Command of the abovesaid,

H. FAGEL.

N I S

HIS MAJESTIES ANSWER

To the *Letter* sent from the
STATES-GENERAL
OF THE
UNITED PROVINCES
Of the Low Countreys, by their Trumpeter.

High and Mighty Lords,



Although your Letter of the ^{15th} of *October*, considering the present conjuncture of affairs, the matter it contains, and the manner of sending it by a Trumpeter, when your Deputies at *Cologne* were in frequent Conferences with Our Plenipotentiaries there, have more of the nature of a Manifest then a Letter, and that consequently you may not perhaps desire to have any Answer made to it; yet for the Vindication of Our Honour, as well as for the undeceiving that part of the World which may be abused by it, We would not suffer it to remain without a distinct Reply, from point to point as they lie in your Paper (which We send you by the same hand that brought Us yours;) and the rather because it may so have fallen out, that by the great revolutions which have lately hapned in your affairs, and the change of your Ministers, even your selves may have taken for truth what evil-minded persons have so maliciously suggested to you, thereby to seduce your own people as well as Ours.

There will need no great proofs to convince the World that many offensive Medals, Inscriptions and Libels were these last years past dispersed every where in your Provinces, to the derogation of Our Honour, and that of the whole *English* Nation, since the notoriety of them was so universal: but to this day neither We nor any body else knew ye had disowned any part of them, until your aforesaid Letter told Us you had at the time they were complained of to your Ambassador here, caused the Stamps to be broken, for fear new Impressions should be secretly made by them, neither do you tell Us that ever you inflicted the least Punishment upon the makers or dispersers of them.

As to the affair of *Surinam*; Could you make the World or Our People believe what in this Paper you affirm, your selves would have out-done your Medals, and would be more injurious then they, fastning a Reproach upon Us which We have been as far from deserving, as you, We hope, will be from being believed in the accusation. You say, you agreed to whatsoever We demanded in favour of Our subjects remaining at *Surinam*. Did We not continually press their Release from the time of Our Surrendring that place into your hands, till the beginning of this present War, and is there not yet the greater part of them remaining there? Are they there detained your Slaves at Our desire? Did We send Our Ships thither onely for a colour, with intention to subject them to your Tyranny more entirely and with the greater decency? and not to deliver them from it? Was not the Officer We sent thither, Major *Banister*, confined presently upon his arrival, and not suffered to speak with his Countrey men, or acquaint them with the care We had of them? Did he not protest against the Governour for having broken the Capitulation in Eighteen several points? And will you say all this was done according to what We desired? Had you been so tender of the blood of both Nations as in your Paper you pretend, you would not so long, and with so much obstinacy have persisted in oppressing those Our Subjects whom you detain in that Colony. And it is manifest, that if you could cast all the blame hereof upon Us, you have a mind to do it. All We can say therefore to this your assertion, is, That you have indeed granted Us in words all We asked, but that We have never obtained any thing of you in deeds.

What followed, was the pretended Satisfaction you say you offered at all times to make Us in relation to the Trade of Our Subjects in the *East-Indies*. It was solemnly promised by the Treaty of *Breda*, that things should be adjusted by Commissioners to be sent hither by you when there should be more leisure for it. But you well know that Our Ambassador whom We sent after the said Treaty to reside with you, could obtain nothing in that matter by all his instances that could in any wise satisfy Our *East-India* Company. Nor did the *Sieur Van Beuningen*, who seemed to have come hither expressly upon that account, offer any more in all his Conferences with Our Commissioners upon that subject. It is true, the Ambassador *Boreel* produced here a full Power from you to treat and conclude an Offensive and Defensive League with Us, but We could not accept the Proposition, because the conditions of it were not sufficiently equitable; and that instead of giving Us satisfaction in Our complaints, he would never so much as admit of their being mentioned. On the contrary, his whole discourse tended to nothing else but to persuade Us, that the States-General offered Us this League as a mark of their Friendship, and for Our security alone, seeming indifferent whether it were accepted or not; and magnifying continually the greatness of your Forces by Land and Sea, as sufficient to defend you against the formidable power of *France*; and often threatening Us, that you could make such a League whensoever you pleased with *France*, and even against Us, if We accepted not what his Masters offered Us. The sum of these two points is, That the *Sieur Van Beuningen* was pleased to discourse concerning the Satisfaction demanded by Us in point of Trade in the *East-Indies*, but departed without offering any thing; and the *Sieur Boreel* offered Us a League

Offensive

Offensive and Defensive, without giving Us Satisfaction for the past Injuries, or security against future; And all this to the end the Injuries We had complained of, that till then were peculiarly your Acts, might by a solemn Treaty be declar'd Our own.

The next matter of offence given Us was (as you well observe in your Letter) the affront committed against Our Flagg in the moneth of *August*, 1671. Complaint was made thereof to your Ambassador residing here, and he assured Us he would procure Us a fair satisfaction thereupon: but three or four moneths time passing, without the least notice being taken thereof by you, We held Our Self obliged to send our Extraordinary Ambassador to demand Satisfaction of you in more earnest terms then We had done before; To which not receiving any satisfactory Answer, he had order to return. Soon after he was followed by an Extraordinary Ambassador from you, who affirmed that he had no Powers to make reparation for this affront, or any other of those things We had so often complained of, but to agree upon terms of Regulation in the business of the Flagg for the future; yet saying withall, that of himself and without consulting you again, he could not put any thing in writing concerning it. The arrival of the said Ambassador Extraordinary was about the time We were ready to make open Declaration of War against your State; which We could no longer delay, because the Spring was coming on, and the said Ambassador persisted, that his Instructions permitted him not to do any thing upon Our Demands; neither was he able to produce any thing to justify his delay, but the offering Us to write to his Masters for larger Powers and Instructions.

The War following upon this, In the heat of it, Three Deputies arrived here from you without any Passports from Us, or giving Us notice of their coming, according to the Customs and Usages of War. Whereupon We might well have confined them (as you say We did) but We contented Our Self with warning them to abstain from coming to lodge in this Our City, appointing them instead thereof, Lodgings in Our Palace of *Hampton Court*, with all other conveniences suitable to their Character, and dissembling what We knew passed between them and persons they practised upon to cause tumults and disorders in Our City, or to disturb the progress of the War. Notwithstanding which, We forbore not to send to them some of the Principal persons of Our Council, to conferre with them and hear their Proposals. To whom they made this only Answer, and persisted therein to the time of their departure, that they had no Authority or Instructions to make any Propositions, but were content to hearken to those that should be made to them, and to transmit them to their Masters; hoping that while they amused Us with this appearance, the Deputies you had sent at the same time to the Most Christian King, might have concluded a separate Treaty with him.

And can you flatter your selves with the opinion, that the World should look upon this proceeding as a convincing proof of your ardent desires for Peace? Did ever Prince or State send an Ambassador with design to obtain that which the Ambassador was not empowered either to conclude or sign, especially to a Prince with whom they had War? It is much more rational to believe what you did was to gain time, whilst you endeavoured to put in execution those threats in relation to *France*, that the *Sieur Boreel* had before given us.

The Minister of *Brandenburgh* never declared that he came hither to make Us any overtures of Peace, or that he had any other Commission then to incline Us, at the recommendation of His Master, to hearken to those that should be made Us. He came hither at the time that the Ambassador Extraordinary of His most Serene Majesty the King of *Sweden* arrived, in order to the offering Us the Mediation of their Master, which We readily embraced, as likewise a Proposition made by them to Us for a Suspension of Arms. But a little after, when they proposed the same thing to you, you thought fit absolutely to reject the Suspension; and were so long bargaining upon the choice of a place for treating the Peace, that many moneths passed without producing any other effect, then your gaining your point in naming the City of *Cologne* for the Congress: Which being agreed to, and Our Fleet ready to put to Sea, you sent Us word you would then accept a Cessation of Arms by Sea. To which We found Our Self obliged to make answer, That a Peace might be made in much less time then the terms of a Partial Suspension be agreed upon: although it appeared to Us a meer artifice, invented only to charm the Common Peoples ears, and make Us consume unprofitably all Our preparations for equipping Our Fleet. In a word, when Our Merchants might really have received benefit by a Suspension, you absolutely refused it, and would then only yeild to it when you saw your Provinces like to suffer by the progress of the War.

The Ministers of *Spain* never offered Us any Conditions: nor performed any other Office, then in general terms to incline Us to the thoughts of Peace, which We ever accepted kindly from them.

Neither did Our Nephew the Prince of *Orange*, ever make Us any Overtures for Peace: We must needs avow, That the manner of your comportment towards him, till the year last past, was no very good Argument to perswade Us, that your intentions of living in a good correspondence with Us, were real and sincere: And although We were unwilling to shew Our resentment of his usage publicly, lest We should give occasion to his enemies to do him more harm; yet so soon as the good will of the people prevailing against the *Louvestein* Party, had conferred upon him that Power and Authority in the Government which his Ancestors had so well merited, We applied Our self with more zeal and efficacy to make
the

the Peace, being further incited thereunto by the unexpected success of the Arms by Land of the most Christian King. We forthwith sent Ambassadors extraordinary to him, to be present at the Treaty; which the *Louvestein* Party would have managed to the excluding of Us, if the Virtue and Generosity of that Prince would have permitted him to admit it: But so soon as Our Ambassadors were seen upon the place, the Deputies withdrew themselves, and never after appeared; following that fundamental Maxim you had laid from the beginning of this War, to divide Us by any kind of Artifices, thereof to make your own advantage.

As to your insinuation of Our intention to ruine Our Nephew the Prince of *Orange*, ye know your selves sufficiently the injustice of that reproach. And whilst at *Cologne* you openly complain to the Mediators, that We are too zealous in advancing his Interests, you would have our Subjects believe We are guilty of ill nature towards him. And the better to improve this abuse you add, without giving or having any the least ground for it, that Our demands at *Cologne* tend to the subversion of the Protestant Religion, and the ruine of Our Nephews family. We cannot conclude Our remarks upon this Letter or Manifest framed by you, with design to abuse your people and Ours, and involved in terms of respect for Our Person, and fair words about a Peace, without adding what ought to be convincing to the most obstinate amongst you; At the same time you would perswade Us to break Our Word and Faith given to Our Allies, not to Treat separately, you establish it for a fundamental point, that you cannot break the word you have given yours, without wronging your honour; as if your honour ought alwayes to be dear to you, but Ours of little or no value with Us.

In the mean time, you make the proceedings of your Deputies at *Cologne* to pass for the fairest and most ingenuous that may be, reproaching that of Our Plenipotentiaries as rude and insincere; saying, That notwithstanding all your endeavours, We would never yet abate of Our first rigour. Herein we appeal to the Mediators themselves, who will not be wanting to do Us justice, in letting the World know, that Our said Plenipotentiaries have retrenched at least one half of their first demands, whilst yours have continually excused themselves from giving an answer upon any one of them, except that of the Flagg, with which they seem inclined to gratifie Us for the future, but in terms very equivocal, and which shall not take notice of any right We ever had to it for the time past: And this is the only thing you have shewn the least disposition to yield to Us, during the whole course of this Negotiation: And having made no further advance in the overtures of Peace, which you say you made Us by Our Nephew the Prince of *Orange*, the Ministers of *Spain* and *Brandenburgh*, and by those of the Mediators themselves, you do not so much as mention one

word of it in your said Letter; handling the matter of the Peace in general terms, to acquire to your selves the reputation of it, and not making Us one Proposition but that of dividing Us from Our Allies; an Action which you esteem too low for a Commonwealth, but suitable enough to a King.

If you have a desire to promote the Peace in good Earnest, instead of specious expressions, send Powers without further delay to your Deputies at *Cologne*, to draw up Just and Equal Articles with Ours; and the World shall see how ready We shall be to Comply with them, and to resume those sentiments of Friendship and esteem, which the Kings Our Predecessors have always had for your State: And to manifest to you that we are truly

Your good Friend,

From Whitehall, the 7th. of
November, 1673.

CHARLES R.

F I N I S.

